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What Goes on Here...

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What Goes on Here...

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Abstract

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In the Fine Arts

What Goes on Here . . .

SOME of the more frequent complaints around the campus concerns courses that are 'required' and, occasionally, courses we'd like to elect but don't, simply because we can't get 'credit' for them. This critical attitude regarding college curricula is widespread, but seldom constructive, however justified it may be. The painful efforts of an educational system to fit the individual for the complexity of this age—in short, to equip him to compete—have caused what is probably the most dangerous trend in our schools today—overspecialization. James Bryant Conant, president of Harvard University, speaking of this fault in education, said, "—Neither the mere acquisition of information nor the development of special skills and talents can give the broad basis of understanding which is essential if our civilization is to be preserved."

Dr. Conant, in 1943, appointed the "Committee on the Objectives of a General Education in a Free Society." Their findings have been widely acclaimed by educators. Recommendations by this group and similar ones have been incorporated into the curricula of many colleges and secondary schools. Unfortunately, the postwar overcrowding has prevented the full implementation of these recommendations.

However, even achievement of these desirable reforms will, by no means, ensure proper education. As Dr. Earnest Hooten, noted anthropologist has put it, "—Education is not planned for each separate individual, but only for total groups of the young, supposedly able to thrive alike on the same mental and physical diet. Education is laid down like an artillery barrage, sometimes so faulty in its sighting that it slays its own advancing troops."

Schopenhauer, even more pessimistic about the benefits of education, said, "—Truth that has been merely learned is like an artificial limb, a false tooth, a waxen nose; at best like a nose made of another's flesh; it adheres to us only because it is put on. But truth acquired by thinking of our own is like a natural limb; it alone really belongs to us."

To some extent, then, we who are in search of an *education* are on our own. It will be as narrow or as wide as we choose to make it. The recognition of this fact is a significant advance toward a goal of understanding and personal harmony. We think it is time we looked about us and took that step.

Which direction shall we go? Will the reading of good books suffice? Are there activities in which we might find expression of the creative sides of our natures? Is the search too exhausting to bother with?

SKETCH believes that opportunities do exist here at Iowa State College, equal to and often surpassing those to be found at many liberal arts universities. And the search is not exhausting—for those who seek.

A series of articles appearing in this and following issues will attempt to investigate some of these activities, their organizations, the figures and groups associated with them, and, if possible, to point out that on this campus an individual needs only a viewpoint to get an *education*.

—Richard Schweet

